

**CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY  
ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP**

Minutes of a Meeting of the Accommodation Working Group held at 12.00 noon on Tuesday 13 December 2005 at Police Headquarters, Penrith

**PRESENT**

Mrs L L Shaw (Chair)

Mr R Cole  
Mrs C A Egan  
Mr R Watson

Mr W Smith  
Mrs P Halfpenny

Also Present:

Deputy Chief Constable, Mrs C Twigg  
Assistant Chief Constable (Organisational Development & Partnerships) Mr N Rhodes,  
Director of Finance and Resources, Mr M Thompson,  
Estates and Facilities Manager, Mr P Robinson,  
Clerk & Chief Executive, Mr C R Alcock,  
Administration Manager, Mrs L Rowbotham,

**16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L Slavin.

**17. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

In relation to agenda item 4 "Reconstruction of the Policing Infrastructure in Carlisle and North Cumbria" -

Mrs L L Shaw declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as her husband was a Member of Cumbria County Council.

Mrs C A Egan declared a personal prejudicial interest as a Magistrate on the Carlisle Bench.

Mr R Cole, Mrs P Halfpenny, Mr W Smith and Mr R. Watson declared personal but not prejudicial interests as Members of Cumbria County Council.

**18. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Accommodation Working Group held on 28 November 2005 had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

**RESOLVED,** that the Minutes of the Accommodation Working Group held on 28 November 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**(Note: Mrs C A Egan withdrew from the meeting).**

## **19. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE POLICING INFRASTRUCTURE IN CARLISLE AND NORTH CUMBRIA**

The Assistant Chief Constable (Organisational Development & Partnerships)(ODP) presented a report to Members which, it was proposed, would be submitted to the Police Authority meeting to be held on 15 December 2005. The report contained detailed options for the reconstruction of the policing infrastructure in Carlisle and North Cumbria and Members were asked to consider each section of the report together with the suggested recommendations.

The Clerk & Chief Executive informed Members that this report was to be submitted to the Police Authority on 15 December 2005, and it was suggested that it be discussed as a Part 1 item when members of the press and public would be present. After considering all the points raised it was agreed that the report would be amended by the Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) and submitted as a Part 1 item to the Police Authority meeting on 15 December 2005.

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) set out the sequence of events since the severe storms in January 2005 had rendered the Rickergate site, which housed North Cumbria BCU and custody facilities, inoperable.

He informed Members that emergency custody arrangements had been set in place both at Carlisle and Penrith. Health and safety issues for staff and prisoners at both sites were of real concern and suggested that the current emergency custody arrangements were unsustainable.

**RESOLVED,** that Members would recommend to the Police Authority Meeting on 15 December 2005 that alternative custody provision be made as soon as possible;

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) updated Members on the current position at the Northern Traffic Unit site at Houghton. He informed Members that planning permission had been refused for the placing of a modular custody unit on the site at Houghton. Attached to the report was a summary of the appeals process (Appendix B), which set out the three appeals procedures available. These were (1) the written procedure, (2) the hearing procedure and (3) the inquiry procedure.

**RESOLVED,** that Members of the Working Group would recommend to the Police Authority Meeting on 15 December 2005 that an appeal be made against the refusal of the planning permission for the Houghton site;

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) discussed with Members the alternative options available for the provision of custody facilities, one of which was the development of the former recreation club at Rickergate together with a modular custody unit containing 10-14 cells, built on a raised platform. It was suggested that the options be developed at the same time and attached to the report was Appendix A which set out the timelines for the development of each project. Members raised the question of flooding on the site and the Estates and Facilities Manager informed them that consultation would take place with both the planning authority and the Environment Agency to determine the extent of any flood risk work to be undertaken in order that the site could be developed.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (i) Members of the Working Group would recommend to the Police Authority Meeting on 15 December 2005 that the Constabulary explore the viability, together with the estimated costs, of developing an interim custody facility at Rickergate; and
- (ii) a temporary planning application for the custody unit be submitted;

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) discussed a further option for the siting of the modular custody unit with Members. It was suggested that areas within the Carleton Hall site would be large enough to accommodate the proposed building, and, although the site was some distance from Carlisle, transport links using prison buses could be developed.

Members discussed the report with the Officers of the Constabulary and raised various points, to which they responded.

**RESOLVED,** that Members of the Working Group would recommend to the Police Authority Meeting on 15 December 2005 that the Constabulary explore the viability and costs involved of locating the custody unit within the headquarters site at Carleton Hall, Penrith, and evaluate the provision of transport links to and from Carlisle;

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) reported that earlier in the year a meeting had been arranged with officers at Carlisle City Council to discuss potential sites and had reviewed the land map for Carlisle. The Estates and Facilities Manager was actively seeking suitable sites and was assessing each new location as it became available. Members had suggested at a

previous meeting of the Accommodation Working Group that an independent consultant be employed to carry out this task. After evaluation of the points raised it was decided by Members that this would not be necessary.

**RESOLVED,** that the use of an external consultant to conduct a land search would not be necessary.

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) presented the section of the report which focussed on funding the interim solution. He reported that in July 2005 after intensive lobbying of the Home Office an additional grant was awarded to assist with building a modular custody unit as part of the interim custody solution. There was a requirement that the money should be spent within the financial year 2005/6. After careful consideration of the level of funding required a second letter had been sent to the Home Office requesting further funding and the relaxation of the period within which invoices must be presented. The matter is currently with the Minister.

Members discussed various points relating to future funding requirements.

**RESOLVED,** that the Clerk & Chief Executive discuss with the Treasurer the future funding for custody facilities in North Cumbria.

The Assistant Chief Constable (ODP) discussed the future of long term policing in North Cumbria with Members. The Government's intentions in relation to Constabulary structures would not be known until January and he proposed that a future meeting of the Accommodation Working Group the Constabulary's Carlisle Redevelopment Project Board would present an options paper together with a progress update regarding interim solutions.

**RESOLVED,** that The Authority and Chief Constable should work to form a joint view as to the long term policing needs of North Cumbria and in particular the City of Carlisle. This work should be informed by an options paper presented to the Accommodation Working Group, by the Constabulary's Carlisle Redevelopment Project Board, setting out options for the future of long term policing in North Cumbria, to include a progress update regarding interim solutions

**(Note: Assistant Chief Constable N Rhodes left the meeting at this point)**

**(Note: Mrs C A Egan rejoined the meeting at 1.45 p.m.)**

## **20. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT**

The Deputy Chief Constable presented a report which sought to up-date Members on the progress being made regarding the capital scheme previously approved for 2004-5 and 2005-6 in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act. A report had been submitted to the Working Group on 2

September 2003 outlining the findings of the DDA audit survey of the Police Authority estate, which had been carried out by specialist consultants. The scheme was based on the survey work and was prioritised.

The Deputy Chief Constable discussed the listed works set out in the report and answered questions from Members.

The Estates & Facilities Manager discussed with Members the funds which were still available for the DDA work and confirmed that all available funding would be spent in the new year on the highest priority schemes.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (a) the contents of the report be noted, and
- (b) a report be submitted to the Accommodation Working Group setting out a list of completed works.

**(Note: Mrs L L Shaw (Chair) left the meeting at 2 p.m.)**

**Mrs Egan in the Chair**

## **21. PREMISES IMPROVEMENT FUND**

The Director of Finance presented a report to Members which set out the final position in relation to projects supported by the 2003/4 Premises Improvement Fund (PIF). He discussed the projects carried out by PIF which were listed within the report and informed Members that these were now complete.

The Director of Finance stated that the funding from the Home Office was awarded subject to a number of conditions, one of which was that a report must be submitted to the Police Authority confirming the final cost and setting out that the scheme had been completed. Members agreed that the report be submitted to the next meeting of the Police Authority on 15 December 2005.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) the report be submitted to the Police Authority meeting on 15 December 2005.

## **22. ESTATES STRATEGY AND FUTURE DIRECTION**

The Director of Finance presented a report to Members which gave a brief summary of the work undertaken during the year regarding the development of an Estates Strategy.

Members discussed the contents of the report and, because the future of the present structure was uncertain it was decided that further development of the

Estates Strategy should be deferred until the outcome of the Police Restructure was known.

The Director of Finance agreed that a further report would be submitted in due course.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) further work on the Estates Strategy be deferred until the outcome of the Police Restructure was known.

### **23. SILLOTH POLICE STATION - UPDATE**

The Deputy Chief Constable gave Members an update on the current situation regarding Silloth Police Station. She informed Members that the sale of the Police Station had been handed to an agent to progress and work was ongoing at the accommodation in the Fire Station. It was hoped that work would be completed and the premises occupied early in 2006.

The Deputy Chief Constable undertook to update Members at the next meeting of the Accommodation Working Group.

Members felt that a visit to Silloth to see the Police Station and the accommodation in the Fire Station would be advantageous. It was agreed that this be arranged at a later date.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (a) the Deputy Chief Constable would provide Members with an update report at the next meeting of the Accommodation Working Group, and
- (b) a visit to both Silloth Police Station and the accommodation in the Fire Station be arranged at a future date.

### **24. GENERAL MAINTENANCE PLAN**

The Director of Finance presented a report, appended to which was a matrix setting out the planned maintenance schedule for 2005/6. The matrix set out works which had been identified, the location and estimated costs together with the condition of the site.

Members thanked him for submitting the report which had been very informative.

The Deputy Chief Constable advised Members that a series of inspections were being carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and it was

anticipated that an Improvement Notice would be received in relation to a site in South Cumbria.

The Deputy Chief Constable undertook to update Members at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) the Deputy Chief Constable present a report to the next meeting of the Accommodation Working Group.

## **25. LPT ACCOMMODATION, WELCH ROAD - UPDATE**

The Director of Finance presented a report, deferred from the meeting on 28 November 2005, which sought to update Members on the current position at Welch Road Local Policing Team (LPT) site. He explained the sequence of events since the first floor of the premises had been occupied and pointed out that as a result of the number of officers deployed from Rickergate since the storms car parking had become an issue. Members raised various queries to which the Constabulary Estates Manager responded.

The Constabulary Estates Manager informed Members that he would be liaising with Carlisle Housing Association to determine the options available. It was agreed that an update report would be submitted for the next meeting of the Working Group.

**RESOLVED,** that

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Accommodation Working Group.

## **26. SCHEDULE OF ITEMS CONSIDERED BY THE WORKING GROUP**

Members considered the schedule of items previously considered by the Working Group as submitted by the Clerk & Chief Executive. In doing so, they worked through the list of items and decided that the following items were still "live" and further reports would be required as indicated

### Item

Asset Register	A report to be submitted to the Working Group on 1 April each year.
Premises Improvement Maintenance Prog.	The report submitted for consideration by the Working Group on 13 December 2005 be submitted to the full Authority Meeting on 15 December 2005.

Disability Discrimination Act	A report to be submitted to the Working Group on 1 April each year.
LPT Accommodation Issues	Reports to be submitted as required. A report regarding Welch Road LPT, Car Parking, to be submitted to the 20 January 2006 meeting of the Working Group.
Design Champion Issues.	A report to be submitted in due course.
Estates Strategy	Reports deferred until outcome of Police Restructure is known.
Silloth Police Station	A report to be submitted to the meeting on 20 January 2006.
HQ Accommodation	A report to be submitted on 1 April 2006.
Carlisle Police Station Rickergate.	A report to be submitted to the meeting on 20 January 2006.
Estates Team & Resources	Report when staff appointed to new posts.

**RESOLVED,** that the position with regard to reports for future meetings be noted.

**27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Accommodation Working Group would be held on 20 January 2006 at 10 a.m.

The meeting ended at 2.30 p.m.